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THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

BENHADAD King of Syria was dangerously sick. Alarmed by his situation he sent to Elisha the prophet to inquire whether he should recover of his disease. The person employed on this errand was Hazael. He appeared before the prophet with presents in his hand, and proceeded to inform him of the object of his visit. During the interview, the prophet fixed his eyes steadily on the countenance of Hazael. Discovering by a prophetic glance those traits in his character which would afterwards develop themselves, and perceiving the cruelties he would one day practise on the inhabitants of Israel, he was unable to repress his feelings or to restrain his tears.

Ignorant of the causes which thus agitated the bosom of Elisha, unable to conjecture the reason of his distress, Hazael with surprise demanded the occasion of his sorrows. He was then explicitly informed of the malignant cruelty and violence with which he would end the career of his life. Unconscious of those seeds of dark deformity which lurked in the hidden recesses of his

heart, his cheek glowed with indignation at the charge, and he exclaimed, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing!"

But mark the weakness and wickedness of man! This same Hazael who was struck with so much horror at the bare charge of violence and cruelty, soon waded to the throne of Syria through the blood of his murdered master. No sooner was he endued with the coveted robe of royalty, than, giddy with power and mad with pride, he became familiar with all those enormities, which, in the fervour of his indignation, he supposed nothing but a brute could commit.

This interesting narrative furnishes many useful subjects of reflection; but we shall only enforce *the necessity of a thorough acquaintance with our own hearts.*

First. This is necessary to prevent us from gradually familiarizing ourselves with disgraceful sins.

Such is man's ignorance of his own heart—so uncertain his hold on integrity, that he may be led to commit crimes which at a former period of his

life he could not have contemplated without horror. To establish this assertion I need not refer to the history of Hazael. Observation will furnish melancholy proofs of its correctness; and it is generally true, that most of those instances of apostacy from virtue, which disgrace society, may be traced to ignorance of real character as their source. Every man has his darling sins, his favourite passions, which he is prone in some degree to gratify. The first compliances are considered as trifling weaknesses, natural infirmities, or little sins. Every unlawful indulgence increases the strength of corrupt desires and weakens the barriers of virtue. Guilt infuses its poison and imperceptibly taints the soul. Conscience may remonstrate, but it is quieted by being reminded of our natural weakness, the strength of temptation, the smallness of the guilt, and of our resolution not to offend in future. It is by artifices of this nature; by appealing to the common practice and sentiments of the world; by contrasting their own conduct with their neighbours; by pleading the peculiarity of their temper, the particular dangers that result from their occupations and situation in life, that men are insensibly led from one step to another in vice. They are unconsciously allured by their favourite and predominant passions, deluded by their self-ignorance and flattery, till their judgement is perverted, their consciences weakened, and they

arrive at the point of wickedness, which, if it had been foretold them at the beginning of their career, would have occasioned them in their surprise to exclaim—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing!" No doubt the surprise and indignation of Hazael was unaffected. We have no reason to suppose that Peter was conscious of any hypocrisy or fraud when he assured our Divine Master that he would sacrifice his life sooner than he would deny him. But the event showed in both cases how extremely ignorant they were of the real condition of their hearts, and of their own characters.

To avoid such humiliating and destructive consequences, we should carefully examine our natural propensities and dispositions, that we may strongly guard those points where we are most vulnerable: Examine whether we have not a secret bias to some of the numberless vices in the black catalogue—Such as intemperance, sensuality, idleness, pride, malice, covetousness, ambition, and many others. To ascertain this we need only consider what indulgences afford us the most gratification—in what company or in what circumstances we are most solicitous to place ourselves—what it is that most destroys our time our temper and our property; consider only these things and we shall be immediately furnished with a clue to our favourite vices and reigning propensities. When we have ascertained this, we

should attend to the occasion, that most usually betrays us into them; consider the spring whence they arise and the circumstances that most favour them:—Had Hazael been conscious of the spirit of ambition by which he was actuated, he would not have been so far deceived by it, as to seek its gratification by an act of violence on the life of his master. Had he known the pride and cruelty that were concealed in his heart, he might have so far shunned the occasion of exciting and indulging them as to decline the kingly office, which he must have known abounded with temptations to their indulgence.

Such is the necessity of a correct knowledge of our own hearts, in order to prevent our favourite vices from betraying us into the grossest enormities. It is impossible for us to be sufficiently guarded before we fully ascertain where we are most in danger. We cannot be too patient and indefatigable in discovering, nor too scrupulous in indulging our reigning propensities. They will assail us in every form, and solicit us under every pretext. We should not forget the gradual encroachments and fatal progress of vice—that one crime invariably paves the way for its successor—that one criminal indulgence may be followed by a train of incalculable evils. Although we may esteem the first as a very trifling sin, resembling the appearance observed by the servant of Elisha—a little cloud as a man's

hand, yet it may produce such a tempest in our souls as shall obliterate every moral impression, and carry ruin and desolation in its progress. Let us not rely altogether on our own watchfulness and care, but let our daily prayer ascend to God for that which must be afforded to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Second. This self-acquaintance is highly requisite to enable us to judge of the virtue of our actions. Our hearts are the most successful flatterers we have. It is a humiliating and painful employment to search out our own defects and infirmities. On this account we are very ready to admit the partial suggestions of our hearts, and it is almost universally the case, that men believe themselves governed by much better motives than they really are. But it is matter of infinite consequence for us to inquire into the secret springs of our actions, to ascertain whether our supposed virtue proceed from a principle of holiness, or whether it may not result from a mere casual combination of circumstances, which we had no agency in producing, or whether our apparent piety is not a cloak, assumed to effect some sinister or selfish purpose.

Except the motives of our conduct be pure and honourable, our religion is not an acceptable service. Virtue, unless it proceed from a principle of love to God and benevolence to men, must be an

accidental, unmeaning effusion, or flagrant hypocrisy. It is not, however, unfrequently the case, that men are entirely ignorant of their motives, and while they deceive others, by an apparently correct conduct, their own hearts deceive them. They may believe themselves actuated by a regard for God and religion, while they are wholly influenced by their private interests, secret vanity or some other sordid motive. Thus Hazael, when his ambition prompted him to murder his king, might believe himself actuated by a just regard for the will of God; because the prophet had told him that he was soon to reign over Syria.—Without some supposition of this nature we may find it difficult to account for the fact, that a man who was so indignant at an insinuation of cruelty, should on the very next day be guilty of murder. No doubt the apostles, James and John, thought themselves actuated by the purest motives, when they requested liberty to call fire from heaven to chastise the insolence of the Samaritans towards their Master. But instead of pure Christian zeal and gentleness they were insensibly governed by a spirit of pride, revenge and cruelty.

We need not wander so far for instances, by which to show the necessity of frequently examining our hearts. Those who are the best satisfied with their religious attainments may perhaps, on investigating the sources of their

actions, discover great cause for humility, and for increased vigilance and circumspection. We may boast of zeal in religion, but it is worth our attention to inquire, whether a natural ardency of temper and a mere *spirit of party* are not the principal causes of our exertion, whether our sharp animadversions do not proceed more from a spirit of censoriousness than piety. On the other hand, when we profess a great degree of liberality, charity and catholicism in matters of religion, it may be well to inquire, whether it does not result from listlessness and inactivity of spirit—from lukewarmness, indifference and disregard to religion in all its forms. We may speak peace to our consciences because we are punctual in attending public worship; but do we go to the house of God, from a principle of conscience, to serve our Creator and Redeemer, and to profit our immortal souls? or is it from custom or curiosity, from a fear of singularity, or even vanity? We are perhaps charitable to the poor; but has neither pride nor ostentation any share in procuring our liberality? We should consider whether even in our best acts we are not more influenced by the opinion and applause of men, than by the will and approbation of God. Unless we are careful and thorough in our examination, we may deceive ourselves to our everlasting ruin, we may esteem ourselves highly for those things which are an a-

bomination in the sight of the Lord. For he seeth not as man seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

Lastly. Self-acquaintance is an essential part of our preparation for death. Clouds and darkness hover over the future condition of that man who is ignorant of himself. True, he needs no argument to convince him that he is fast approaching the boundaries of his existence on earth ; he entertains no doubt but that the thread of life will soon be cut asunder, but ignorant of what he is, he must hang in doubtful anxiety for what he shall be. Not so with the man who is not a stranger to his own bosom. Having become previously assured of the reality

of a future state of happiness, and of the qualifications requisite for obtaining it ; and having been able after long and patient investigation to discover in himself those affections and habits, which through the grace of Jesus Christ shall procure him admission to heaven, he enjoys a cheerful serenity in the evening of his days. The prospect of another life smoothes the pillow of death, for the grave has no terrors to alarm him. Do we desire to procure a fair and honourable reputation in life, to become tranquil and resigned in the hour of death, and happy through the revolving ages of eternity ? Then, next to the knowledge of God, let us strive to obtain knowledge of ourselves. A.

TRUE GREATNESS.

MR. EDITOR,

A CORRESPONDENT takes the liberty to send you an extract from a Sermon, preached in a country village, the sabbath after the interment of the late Chief Justice Parsons ; not for the sake of eulogizing his character, but to extend the influence of an example, by which "he, being dead, yet speaketh." The text was in Matthew 23. 11. "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant ;" and the extract is as follows :

"How dignified, how amiable, how happy is he, who, in imitation of his Father in

For the Christian Disciple.

heaven, does good to all ! Who is great, not so much on account of any exclusive privileges, with which he is favoured, as because he is useful to his brethren of every class : because he adopts and pursues a conduct tending to diffuse contentment and joy throughout the circle of his intercourse and acquaintance : because he is just, charitable, and beneficent in the prevailing series of his actions.

"In whatever sphere he moves, his first concern is to fulfil the various obligations, under which he is laid. This he believes the highest hon-

our within the reach of his attainment. Is he stationed in the humbler walks of society? Far from thinking himself at liberty to disregard the comfort of others, he uses all the means in his power to promote it. Is he blessed with affluence and plenty? Instead of cherishing the sordid disposition of the miser, or falling into the shameful excesses of the voluptuary, he considers that he is but the steward of divine bounty, and, therefore, "uses this world, as not abusing it;" is "rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for himself a good foundation against the time to come." Is he called to posts of public trust? Not his own profit or gratification, but the welfare of his country is the object of his most ardent pursuit. In prosecution of this object, he spares no pains, and withholds no sacrifice which duty demands. In a word, his whole character proves him the friend of human kind. Faithful to his promises, upright in his dealings, industrious in his calling, condescending in his manners, benevolent in his feelings, he contributes much to the general good. He achieves the end of his creation, and rises to permanent greatness and honour; he commands the respect of beholders, and, in defiance of every adverse event, is provided with a source of consolation and felicity in himself.

"What a blessing are such men to the world! and how

great the loss which survivors sustain, when the time of their departure arrives! With this blessing we were indulged, in the life, and with this loss we are afflicted, by the death of the late Chief Justice of the Commonwealth. Distinguished by a native acuteness of understanding almost without a parallel, his gigantic mind, versed in all the learning of the age, and capable of efforts and achievements, beyond the conception of ordinary intellects, was happily engaged in the public service, and disposed to advance the cause of truth and righteousness. Whilst he sustained the important and responsible office, in which he died, he did much to simplify and facilitate the administration of justice; and had he been spared to complete his designs, most of the perplexity and delay, so often complained of, in juridical proceedings, would probably have disappeared. Not were his vigilance and sagacity less successfully exerted in behalf of our University. In consequence of arrangements suggested or patronized by him, as a member of its Corporation, that venerable Institution is raised to an elevation, unknown in former times, and presents a prospect of increasing respectability and usefulness, for which we might, otherwise, have looked in vain. Inured to intense application, how many, and how great the benefits, which might have been anticipated from the continued exertion of his pre-eminent talents, guided, as they

confessedly were, by christian principles ! Yes, on the most deliberate, profound, and critical examination of the subject, this great man was an undoubting believer in the gospel of Christ ; and let the ephemeral assailants of our holy faith, awed by the recollection of such a champion, who, though "dead, yet speaketh," retire in silence, and "cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord "

"Few instances of mortality have occurred in our land, which are more deeply to be lamented ; perhaps none, since Washington was called to the skies. But to eulogize the deceased is not my object. I only wish to fix your attention on the conduct of providence in his removal, and to persuade you, whilst you look to God for direction and aid, to imitate the example, and receive the instruction before you.

"To make the salutary tendency and result of our conduct the exclusive ground and measure of our claims to distinction is unquestionably incumbent upon us all. View this process in the abstract, and it is full of dignity and beauty. View it in contrast with its opposite, and this dignity and beauty are unspeakably heightened. View it in its obvious consequences, and a variety of motives, irresistible to the ingenuous mind, will enforce its adoption.

"Here, then is ample scope for the exercise of an ambition, equally laudable and boundless. We are under

no necessity of waiting for some signal, some rare occasion to display those talents and virtues, which shall raise us to eminence and glory : nor are we warranted to imagine true greatness confined to a few chosen spirits, who now and then, outstrip their fellows, and shine with the dazzling lustre of genius, conquest, or wealth. Opportunity is daily and hourly given us to distinguish ourselves, by achievements, to which both a temporal and an eternal crown are annexed. In the ordinary business and commerce of life ; in our domestic, social, and civil relations, though seldom called to exemplify a degree of courage, or a species of conduct adapted suddenly to arouse the admiration and astonishment of the world ; yet the numberless tender charities, which perceptibly sweeten existence, and render it more supportable and happy, incessantly invite our attention, and urge us to action. These, when performed with a devout respect to the divine command, and a benevolent regard to the comfort, improvement, and salvation of those around us, will invest us with a character, at once, acceptable in the sight of God, and honourable in the estimation of man. These, of course, will be highly advantageous to us, in every period of our pilgrimage state, as well as, "at the resurrection of the just."

"Whilst, therefore, we cultivate an habitual sense of our responsibility, at the tribunal

of Heaven, and conscientiously discharge the offices of piety and worship, let us never dispense with the obligations which we owe to our families, our neighbours, our country, and our kind. "To do good and communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

REFLECTIONS ON THE DECREASE OF AMERICAN INDIANS.

THE history of the extermination of the Indian tribes in both divisions of America, affords matter for painful reflection to the christian philanthropist. The causes which have contributed to the decrease of these tribes have perhaps never been thoroughly investigated nor understood. Too much has been attributed to the special and secret agency of Heaven, and too little to the inhuman and improper conduct of professed Christians.

The people of the United States, at least many of them, read with horror the history of South America and the conduct of the Spaniards towards the natives. The Spaniards invaded that country under the profession of christianity, accompanied with priests of the Roman Catholic religion. The king of Spain obtained from the Roman Pontiff, as Head of the Christian church, a grant of a country to which he had no better title than Satan had to "all the kingdoms of the world," when he offered them to the Messiah. But this grant encouraged a horde of military desperadoes to invade the country and to commit the most dreadful outrages, as an acceptable service to God and the Church. Had the invading army been educa-

ted in the infernal regions, it would be difficult to conceive how their conduct could have been more barbarous and antichristian. It is perhaps no injustice to say, that the Indians themselves were less savage than their christian tormentors.

Any one who has attentively read the history of the Spanish conquest, will not be at all surprised at the answer given to a friar by one of the Indian Chiefs. Having been condemned to perish in flames, "When Hatuey was fastened to the stake, a friar, labouring to convert him, promised him immediate admittance into the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the christian faith. 'Is there,' said the Chief, 'any Spaniards in that region of bliss which you describe?' 'Yes, answered the friar, but only such as are worthy and good.' 'The best of them, replied the Sachem, have neither worth nor goodness; I will not go to a place where I may meet one of that accursed race.'"

Such views of Christians must naturally have been imbibed by the Indians of South America, in consequence of the cruel treatment which they received from the Spaniards. Instead of being treated as brethren, according to

the spirit of the gospel, they were treated as an inferior race of beings, unfit to live in the creation of God. Instead of displaying the spirit of kindness, these warring fanatics acted the part of fiends, under the name of Christians. Their boasted conquest, which they regarded as a *triumph of the cross*, was a disgrace to the whole christian world.

It is easy to see that such conduct on the part of men professing to be christians, must excite in the natives a lasting and almost invincible prejudice against Christianity. For what could be more natural for them, than to judge of the character of christianity from the conduct of those who had desolated their country and murdered its inhabitants. And, indeed, if the christian religion would justify such havoc it ought to be rejected by every human being; for in that case it would have every feature of that wisdom which is from beneath.

As fraud and violence were the means by which the Spaniards acquired possession of the country, and as a vast portion of the natives were destroyed by the wars of conquest, the survivors would naturally harbour a spirit of jealousy and revenge; they would also avail themselves of every opportunity for recovering their country and their rights, which afforded any prospect of success. Thus the work of extermination would be renewed and prolonged, till they became few in number.

What a shocking idea of

God must men entertain, who can imagine that he was pleased to see his heathen children exterminated, to make room for such a race of christian murderers! And of what advantage could it have been to the surviving savages, to embrace such a religion as had deluged their country in blood! How detestable in its nature, and how horrible in its effects, is that delusion which has associated the name of the Saviour with fraud and violence, cruelty and murder, military fanaticism and every thing hateful in the sight of God!

We hope and believe that the spirit of war and extermination was far less prevalent among our ancestors in this northern region, than among the conquerors of South America. But it ought to be remembered, that our histories of Indian wars, were written by men who were naturally inclined to excuse the faults of our forefathers, or draw over them the veil of oblivion. The history of a country, when written by one of its inhabitants, is like biography of a deceased person, written by a surviving friend. The virtues of the deceased are proclaimed and often overrated—his faults are not mentioned at all, or but glanced at and palliated. We should also bear in mind, that deception and falsehood are never-failing companions of war; each party misrepresents both the conduct of the other and its own. By this means the most impartial historian is liable to be misled. If he attends to the reports of one

side only, he will unquestionably misrepresent ; if he hears from both parties, he will often be perplexed, in his attempts to ascertain the truth. The French history of the conduct of our ancestors in the wars with the Indians, is widely different from our own ; and had the Indians been capable of writing a history for themselves, they would doubtless have recorded many things which have been omitted by our historians, and have given a very different account of many things which they have professed to state correctly.

But after all that may be said of the partiality or impartiality with which our histories have been written, they are found to contain many particulars in the conduct of our ancestors, which their posterity cannot but lament, and which may go far in accounting for the diminution of the Indian tribes. I shall not give a long catalogue of those unpleasant occurrences ; and should be willing that the veil might be completely drawn over the failings of our ancestors, were it not for the hope that useful lessons of instruction and admonition may be derived from them, for the people of the present age ; and that these failings may become the means of exciting more compassion towards the surviving aborigines.

One passage from Hutchinson's "Collection of Original Papers," with his note upon it, may be here introduced. In 1645 the new colonies united their forces in aid of the Mo-

heggen Sachem against several other tribes. The war was under the direction of Commissioners appointed by the colonies. These Commissioners gave the chief command of the troops to Major Gibbone. In their Instructions to him we have the following passage.

"You are to make fair wars, without exercising cruelty, and not to put to death such as you shall take captive, if you can bestow them without danger of your own. You are to use your best endeavours to gain the enemies canoes, or utterly to destroy them ; and herein you may make good use of the Indians our confederates, as you may do upon other occasions, having due respect to the honour of God, who is both our sword and shield—and to the distance which is to be observed betwixt Christians and Barbarians, as well in wars as in other negotiations."

The note of Mr. Hutchinson respects what is said of the "*distance which is to be observed between Christians and barbarians.*" On this he judiciously remarks :—

"It seems strange that men who professed to believe that God had made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, should so early and upon every occasion take care to preserve this distinction. Perhaps nothing has more effectually defeated the endeavours for christianizing the Indians. It seems to have done more—to have sunk their spirits, led

them to intemperance, and extirpated the whole race."

The disposition indulged by our ancestors of exalting Christians and undervaluing Indians was pernicious in its effects, not only on the natives but on themselves. For regarding the Indians as a race of beings not worthy to be treated as brethren, bewildered their minds in respect to the path of wisdom and duty, prepared them to violate the golden rule, and to justify acts on their own part which can never be reconciled either to equity or humanity. As this sentiment disposed them to treat the Indians unkindly, it of course excited a spirit of hostility and revenge against themselves, which in its progress involved frequent and deplorable calamities. To their disposition to have a distance observed between themselves and the Indians, we may impute their *hundred pound premiums* for Indian scalps, to induce men to form hunting parties for destroying the Indians, as they would have done beasts of prey. To the same disposition we may impute their advice to Uncas to murder Miantonimo a formidable Chief of another tribe, after he had been taken captive. Many other things of a similar character probably originated from the same source.

To this unfortunate sentiment we may impute the expressions in prayer which were handed down from father to son, in which they gave praise to God for *driving out the heathen* and giving this good

land to Christians. When the nature of this driving out shall be weighed in the balances of the gospel, and when christians shall be disposed seriously to reflect on the spirit which has been too generally displayed towards the Indians—especially by those concerned in the wars, and who could offer or receive premiums for scalps, there will perhaps be found more cause for weeping and regret, than for triumph and exultation.

There has doubtless been in every age from the apostle Eliot to the present time, persons in New-England as well as in other parts of the country who possessed tender feelings towards the natives, and who were disposed to treat them with brotherly kindness. But notwithstanding all that we have on record of a benevolent character towards that unhappy race, there is abundant evidence that the more common feeling has been of an opposite character, and far from christian. "Get out you Indian dog" is expressive of the feelings of vast numbers of the white people of our country in former ages, and in the present age.

The writer of this article can distinctly recollect the manner in which some aged people of the last century conversed on the subject of hunting Indians—men who in other respects and on other subjects appeared to be christians indeed. But in speaking of the exploits in the wars with the Indians, they betrayed a spirit as foreign to that of the

Messiah in praying for his enemies, as darkness to light. By education they had imbibed, and by practice they had confirmed a habit of feeling towards the natives which would have been shocking to themselves could they have seen it with unprejudiced eyes. Such a feeling, it is believed, was too commonly indulged by our ancestors in New-England, and transmitted from one generation to another. It is frequently manifest in their history, and may probably account in a great measure for the multitude of their wars, and for the extermination of many of the Indian tribes. This feeling would naturally lead them to make war on slight grounds, to exaggerate the faults of the natives, and to overlook, palliate, or justify their own. To a similar feeling we may doubtless ascribe the greater part of the modern wars with the Indians, and even that which exists at the present time.

If instead of that haughty sentiment of superiority and "distance" indulged by our ancestors, they had commenced their intercourse with the Indians on the heavenly principles of peace on earth and good will to men, and had treated the natives as brethren; they might have saved themselves from great expense and calamity, have saved the Indians from extermination, and have been regarded by them as benefactors and saviours, and not as enemies and destroyers. By indulging such improper views and feelings towards their red brethren, they

brought evil on themselves and entailed it to their posterity. On the other hand, the Indians, perceiving that they were despised, and finding themselves overpowered and overcome, very readily formed habits of intemperance—being supplied with intoxicating liquors by their white neighbours; and thus, instead of multiplying, they have been wasting and diminishing for several generations. And we may expect that this course of waste and diminution will be continued till the tribes are totally extirpated from the land—unless feelings of benevolence and commiseration can be so far excited in our people, as to effect a change of conduct towards them, and vigorous efforts to save them from complete extermination.

Other causes have doubtless co-operated with those which have been named to produce the affecting results. But the other causes should never be mentioned as excusing the wrongs which have been done to our fellow beings. We ought rather to consider what would have been our views of a people, more intelligent and powerful than our ancestors were one hundred years ago, had they come and established themselves in this country, treated our fathers as a worthless race, offering premiums for their scalps, gradually dispossessing them of their lands and driving them into the wilderness, and after sinking their spirits, supplying them with the means of self-destruction; and thus by the

power of the sword and the power of rum, had not only prevented their multiplying, but had occasioned a dreadful diminution—many large families or tribes being totally exterminated, and the remaining tribes dispirited and few in number.

Such reflections may well awaken a spirit of mourning for the Indian blood which has been shed by Christians, and a spirit of sympathy and compassion for the surviving tribes. Perhaps there are no people who are more easily won by kindness than those whom we have been accustomed to call savages; and all the evidence of this fact, goes to prove the imprudence or inhumanity with which they have been treated. This evidence may also be employed to enforce the obligations which our people are now under, to do all they can to wipe away the reproach of blood guiltiness, and to save the tribes which yet survive.

What a source of consola-

tion would it have been to multitudes of the present generation, if the same benevolent policy had been adopted in all the colonies, which was adopted by the founder of Pennsylvania—a policy which preserved uninterrupted peace with the Indians for SEVENTY YEARS, and even as long as it was pursued. Shall then no powerful exertions be made to revive and extend this kind and saving policy? Shall nothing be done to save our own posterity from the mortifying reflection, that after the Indians had been reduced to a very small number, their christian neighbours, even in the 19th century, *did not cease to pursue towards them a bloody, anti-christian and exterminating policy.*

“WHERE IS ABEL THY BROTHER?—*I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?* WHAT HAST THOU DONE? THE VOICE OF THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH UNTO ME FROM THE GROUND!”

THE REV. S. C. THACHER.

From the North American Review and Miscellaneous Journal.

[THE Rev. S. C. THACHER, late Minister of the New South Church in this town, died at Moulins, in France, Jan. 2, 1818, *Ætat.* 32. He had long been absent from this country, for the recovery of his health. The following sketch of his character is taken from a discourse delivered in this town, the Sunday after the accounts of his death were received. The form, in

which the discourse was delivered, is retained, as most favourable to the free expression of the feelings of the author.]

THE news of Mr. Thacher's death, although not unexpected, spread an unusual gloom through the large circle in which he moved and was known. When we thought of his youth and virtues, of the place which he had filled and

of the confidence which he had inspired, of his sickness and sufferings, of his death in a distant land, and of the hopes which died with him, we could not but speak of his removal as mysterious, dark, untimely. My own mind participated at first in the general depression; but in proportion as I have reflected on the circumstances of this event, I have seen in them a kindness, which I overlooked in the first moments of sorrow; and though in many respects inscrutable, this dispensation now wears a more consoling aspect.

I now see in our friend a young man, uncommonly ripe in understanding and virtue, for whom God appointed an early immortality. His lot on earth was singularly happy; for I have never known a minister more deeply fixed in the hearts of his people. But this condition had its perils. With a paternal concern for his character God sent adversity, and conducted him to the end of his being by a rougher but surer way, a way trodden and consecrated by the steps of the best men before him. He was smitten by sudden sickness; but even here the hand of God was gentle upon him. His sickness, whilst it wasted the body, had no power over the spirit. His understanding retained its vigour; and his heart, as I often observed, gained new sensibility. His sufferings, by calling forth an almost unprecedented kindness in his people, furnished him with new and constant occasions of pious gratitude, and

perhaps he was never so thankful to the Author of his being, as during his sickness.—He was indeed removed at length from the kind offices of his friends. But this event was fitted, and, may I not say, designed, to strengthen his connexion with God, and to prepare him for the approaching dissolution of all earthly ties. I now see him tossed on the ocean; but his heart is fixed on the rock of ages. He is borne to another hemisphere; but every where he sees the footsteps and feels the presence of God. New constellations roll over his head; but they guide his mind to the same Heaven, which was his hope at home. I see him at the extremity of Africa, adoring God in the new creation which spread around him, and thanking him with emotion for the new strength, which that mild atmosphere communicated. I see him too in the trying scene which followed, when he withered and shrunk like a frail plant under the equinoctial sun, still building piety on suffering, and growing in submission, as hope declined. He does not indeed look without an occasional sinking of the heart, without some shudderings of nature, to a foreign soil as his appointed grave. But he remembers, that from every region there is a path to immortality, and that the spirit, which religion has refined, wherever freed from the body, will find its native country. He does not indeed think without emotion of home,—a thought, how try-

ing to a sick and dying man, in a land of strangers ! But God, whom he adores as every where present, seems to him a bond of union to distant friends, and he finds relief in committing them to his care and mercy. At length I see him expire ; but not until suffering has done its work of discipline and purification. His end is tranquil, like his own mild spirit ; and I follow him—not to the tomb, for that lifeless body is not he—but to the society of the just made perfect. His pains are now past. He has found a better home, than this place of his nativity and earthly residence. Without the tossings of another voyage, he has entered a secure haven. The fever no longer burns in his veins — The hollow and deep voice no longer sends forth ominous sounds. Disease and death, having accomplished their purpose, have lost their power, and he remembers, with gratitude, the kind severity with which they conducted him to a nobler life, than that which they took away. Such is the aspect which this dispensation now wears ;—how different from that which it first presented to sense and imagination !

Let me pay a short tribute to his memory. It is a duty, which I perform with a melancholy pleasure. His character was one, which it is soothing to remember. It comes over the mind, like the tranquilizing breath of spring. It asks no embellishment. It

would be injured by a strained and laboured eulogy.

The character of our friend was distinguished by blandness, mildness, equableness and harmony. All the elements were tempered in him kindly and happily. He had nothing of asperity. He passed through the storms, tumults and collisions of human life, with a benignity akin to that, which marked our perfect Guide and Example. This mild and bland temper spread itself over the whole man. His manners, his understanding, his piety, all received a hue from it, just as a soft atmosphere communicates its own tender and tranquil character to every object and scene viewed through it.

With this peculiar mildness he united firmness. His purposes, whilst maintained without violence, were never surrendered but to conviction. His opinions, though defended with singular candour, he would have sealed with his blood. He possessed the only true dignity, that which results from proposing habitually a lofty standard of feeling and action ; and accordingly the love, which he called forth, was always tempered with respect. He was one of the last men to be approached with a rude familiarity.

His piety was a deep sentiment. It had struck through and entwined itself with his whole soul. In the freedom of conversation I have seen how intimately God was present to him. But his piety

partook of the general temperament of his mind. It was warm, but not heated; earnest, but tranquil; a habit, not an impulse; the air which he breathed, not a tempestuous wind, giving occasional violence to his emotions. A constant dew seemed to distil on him from heaven, giving freshness to his devout sensibilities; but it was a gentle influence, seen not in its falling, but in its fruits. His piety appeared chiefly in gratitude and submission, sentiments peculiarly suited to such a mind as his. He felt strongly, that God had crowned his life with peculiar goodness, and yet, when his blessings were withdrawn, his acquiescence was as deep and sincere as his thankfulness.—His devotional exercises in public were particularly striking. He came to the mercy seat, as one, who was not a stranger there. He seemed to inherit from his venerable father the gift of prayer. His acts of adoration discovered a mind penetrated by the majesty and purity of God; but his sublime conceptions of these attributes were always tempered and softened by a sense of the divine benignity. The

that is solemn and venerable; and the general effect of his prayers was to diffuse a devout calmness, a filial confidence, over the minds of his pious hearers.

His understanding was of a high order; active, vigorous and patient; capable of exerting itself with success on every subject; collecting materials and illustrations from every scene; and stored with a rich and various knowledge, which few have accumulated at so early an age. His understanding, however, was in harmony with his whole character. It was not so much distinguished by boldness, rapidity and ardour, as by composed energy, judiciousness, and expansiveness. You have an emblem of it in the full, transparent and equable stream spreading around it fruitfulness and delight. His views were often original and often profound, but were especially marked by justness, clearness and compass of thought. I have never known a man, so young, of riper judgment, of more deliberate investigation, and of more comprehensive views of all the bearings and connexions of a subject, on which he was called to decide.

when he communicated the thoughts of others, he first grafted them on his own mind, so that they had the raciness of a native growth. His opinions were the results of much mental action, of many comparisons, of large and liberal thinking, of looking at a subject on every side; and they were expressed with those limitations, which long experience suggests to others. He read with pleasure the bold and brilliant speculations of more adventurous minds; but he reserved his belief for evidence, for truth; and if the most valuable gift of the understanding be an enlarged, discriminating judgment, then his was a most highly gifted mind.

From a mind so balanced, and a taste so refined, we could hardly expect that fervid eloquence, which electrifies an assembly, and makes the speaker for a moment an absolute sovereign over the souls of men. His influence, like that of the great powers in the natural world, was mild and noiseless, but penetrating and enduring. That oratory, which overwhelms and bears us away like a torrent, almost always partakes of exaggeration and extravagance, and was

a peculiar grace to every subject susceptible of ornament.

—His command over language was great. His style was various, vigorous, unborrowed; abounding in felicities of expression; and singularly free from that triteness and that monotonous structure, which the habit of rapid composition on familiar subjects almost forces on the preacher, and which so often enervate the most powerful and heart-stirring truths.—His character as a preacher needs no other testimony than the impression left on his constant and most enlightened hearers. To his people, who could best judge of his intellectual resources and of his devotion to his work, his public services were more and more interesting. They tell us of the affluence of his thoughts, of the beauty of his imagery, of the tenderness and earnestness of his persuasions, of the union of judgement and sensibility in his discourses, and of the wisdom with which he displayed at the same moment the sublimity and practicableness of Christian virtue. They tell us, that the early ripeness of his mind did not check its growth; but that every year enlarged his treasures and powers. Their tears

partook of the general temperament of his mind. It was warm, but not heated; earnest, but tranquil; a habit, not an impulse; the air which he breathed, not a tempestuous wind, giving occasional violence to his emotions. A constant dew seemed to distil on him from heaven, giving freshness to his devout sensibilities; but it was a gentle influence, seen not in its falling, but in its fruits. His piety appeared chiefly in gratitude and submission, sentiments peculiarly suited to such a mind as his. He felt strongly, that God had crowned his life with peculiar goodness, and yet, when his blessings were withdrawn, his acquiescence was as deep and sincere as his thankfulness.—His devotional exercises in public were particularly striking. He came to the mercy seat, as one, who was not a stranger there. He seemed to inherit from his venerable father the gift of prayer. His acts of adoration discovered a mind penetrated by the majesty and purity of God; but his sublime conceptions of these attributes were always tempered and softened by a sense of the divine benignity. The *paternal character* of God was not only his belief, but had become a part of his mind. He never forgot, that he ‘worshipped *the Father*.’ His firm conviction of the strict and proper unity of the divine nature taught him to unite and concentrate in his conception of *the Father*, all that is lovely and attractive, as well as all

that is solemn and venerable; and the general effect of his prayers was to diffuse a devout calmness, a filial confidence, over the minds of his pious hearers.

His understanding was of a high order; active, vigorous and patient; capable of exerting itself with success on every subject; collecting materials and illustrations from every scene; and stored with a rich and various knowledge, which few have accumulated at so early an age. His understanding, however, was in harmony with his whole character. It was not so much distinguished by boldness, rapidity and ardour, as by composed energy, judiciousness, and expansiveness. You have an emblem of it in the full, transparent and equable stream spreading around it fruitfulness and delight. His views were often original and often profound, but were especially marked by justness, clearness and compass of thought. I have never known a man, so young, of riper judgment, of more deliberate investigation, and of more comprehensive views of all the bearings and connexions of a subject, on which he was called to decide. He was singularly free from the error into which young preachers most readily fall, of overstating arguments, and exaggerating and straining the particular topics which they wish to enforce. But in avoiding extravagance, he did not fall into tameness. There was a force and freshness in his conceptions; and even

when he communicated the thoughts of others, he first grafted them on his own mind, so that they had the raciness of a native growth. His opinions were the results of much mental action, of many comparisons, of large and liberal thinking, of looking at a subject on every side; and they were expressed with those limitations, which long experience suggests to others. He read with pleasure the bold and brilliant speculations of more adventurous minds; but he reserved his belief for evidence, for truth; and if the most valuable gift of the understanding be an enlarged, discriminating judgment, then his was a most highly gifted mind.

From a mind so balanced, and a taste so refined, we could hardly expect that fervid eloquence, which electrifies an assembly, and makes the speaker for a moment an absolute sovereign over the souls of men. His influence, like that of the great powers in the natural world, was mild and noiseless, but penetrating and enduring. That oratory, which overwhelms and bears us away like a torrent, almost always partakes of exaggeration and extravagance, and was therefore incompatible with the distinguishing properties of his mind.—His imagination was fruitful and creative; but, in accordance with his whole character, it derived its illustrations more frequently from regions of beauty than of grandeur, and it imparted a colouring, at once rich and soft, and

a peculiar grace to every subject susceptible of ornament.

—His command over language was great. His style was various, vigorous, unborrowed; abounding in felicities of expression; and singularly free from that triteness and that monotonous structure, which the habit of rapid composition on familiar subjects almost forces on the preacher, and which so often enervate the most powerful and heart-stirring truths.—His character as a preacher needs no other testimony than the impression left on his constant and most enlightened hearers. To his people, who could best judge of his intellectual resources and of his devotion to his work, his public services were more and more interesting. They tell us of the affluence of his thoughts, of the beauty of his imagery, of the tenderness and earnestness of his persuasions, of the union of judgement and sensibility in his discourses, and of the wisdom with which he displayed at the same moment the sublimity and practicableness of Christian virtue. They tell us, that the early ripeness of his mind did not check its growth; but that every year enlarged his treasures and powers. Their tears and countenances tell us, more movingly than words, their deep sorrow, now that they shall hear his voice no more.

Of his social character I need not speak to you. No one, who ever met him in a friendly circle, can easily forget the attraction of his manners and conversation. He

carried into society a cheerfulness, a sunshine of the soul, derived partly from constitution, and partly from his bright, confiding views of religion; a delicacy, which instinctively shrunk from wounding the feelings of the humblest human being; a disposition to sympathise with every innocent enjoyment; and the power of communicating with ease and interest the riches of his mind. Without effort, he won the hearts of men to a singular degree. Never was man more universally beloved. Even in sickness and in foreign lands, he continued to attract friends; and it is our consolation to know, that his virtues drew from strangers much of that kindness which blessed him at home.

In his sickness I was particularly struck with his submission to God, and his affection for his people. His submission seemed entire. There was no alloy of impatience or distrust. His sickness was a severe trial; for his heart was bound up in his profession, and if in any thing his ambition was excessive, it was in his desire to enrich his mind by laborious study. He felt deeply his privations, and he looked forward to an early death as a probable event. But he bowed to Providence without a murmur. He spoke only of the divine goodness. 'I am in God's hand, and his will be done,' were familiar sentiments, not uttered with common place and mechanical formality, but issuing, as his tones and countenance discovered, from the

very depths of his heart. A firmer and calmer submission could hardly have been formed by a long life of suffering.

His feelings towards his people seemed at times too strong for the self-possession and calmness by which he was characterised. Their kindness overpowered him. The only tears, which I saw start from his eyes, flowed from this source. In my last interview with him, a day or two before his voyage, I said to him, 'I trust that you will return, but I fear you cannot safely continue your pastoral relation. We have, however, another employment for you, in which you may be useful and happy.' He answered, 'if I get strength I shall use it for my people. I am willing to hazard my life for their sakes. I would preach to them, although the effort should shorten my days.' He added—'Should I forsake my people after the kindness I have received, the cause of religion and of the ministry might suffer; and to this cause I ought and am willing to make any sacrifices.'

Such is a brief sketch of our lamented friend. He was one of the most blameless men, of the most devoted ministers, and of the fairest examples of the distinguishing virtues of Christianity. He has gone, I doubt not to a better world. Let us hear him from his new abode admonishing us of the frailty of life, and assuring us of the happiness of a Christian death. The removal of the excellent ought to carry our thoughts to Heaven. That

world, how delightful is it, as the resort of all the good from all regions of the Earth ! Are our steps tending thither ; and, when we die, shall we leave

behind us recollections, which will encourage our friends to look up and to say,—They are at rest in Heaven ?

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,
WHICH REFER TO SENTIMENTS, &c. AMONG THE JEWS, IN
THE TIME OF OUR LORD.

[Continued from No. 6, Vol. 4th.]

LII.

Matth. v. 23, 24. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee ; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come, and offer thy gift.*

It was a custom, and even a law among the Jews, that the sacrifices of persons who were considered as unclean, should not, during the time of this uncleanness, be brought to the altar ; but should be reserved to the immediately following feast, either of the Passover, or of Pentecost, or of Tabernacles. In commanding the Jews therefore, when they brought their gifts to the altar of God, and there remembered that their brother had aught against them, to leave their gifts, and to go their way, and first to be reconciled to their brother before they offered their gift, our Lord referred them to times, when every Israelite who could be, was at Jerusalem ; and when therefore every man, who should remember in the very moment when about to offer his gift, that he had injured any one, then even afar off,

could have opportunity of seeking reconciliation. They who were most widely separated at other times, were brought together at the seasons of the great feasts. It is to be observed also, that the oblation made by any one who had unjustly taken money, and even the smallest sum, from his neighbour, and had not made restitution, was considered by Jews as vain ; of no worth in the sight of God. But our Lord extends his precept to the comprehension of every offence and injury, committed by any one who would bring his gift to the altar. The emphasis of his command is on the expression, “and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught,—any thing whatever to allege against thee ;” and he here teaches us, as he taught them who heard him, that it is in vain for us to bring any offering to God, if we feel not a sincere charity towards all mankind.—He vainly worships God as a christian, who has not sought reconciliation with him whom he has injured ; or who withholds forgiveness from the injurer.

The great object of this, as of many of our Lord's precepts, is to bring the whole soul into

subjection to God; and every action of life into the circle of his service. All the offices of christian piety are designed to minister to our moral improvement; and then only is our morality in the spirit of the gospel, when it is sanctified by an ultimate reference to the will, and to the approbation of God. When we stand praying, we are to forgive, if we have ought against any; for if we forgive not, if we love not our brother, we cannot love God, nor are we ever permitted even to ask His forgiveness. Our sacrifice, whatever it be, must be *unblemished* by any depraved passion; by any corrupt desire. It must be offered with *the whole heart*, and with a heart which *God will approve*. Our Lord did not indeed teach the Jews, nor does he teach us, that offerings to God should be withholden, in all cases, till reconciliation is obtained with all who have been injured; for circumstances may for a long time, make mutual reconciliation to be utterly impracticable. But he taught them, and he requires of us, that *in the heart of the worshipper of God*, if he have injured any one, there should be *no obstacle to reconciliation*; that the earliest opportunity should be faithfully improved, of conciliating our offended or injured brother, and of making reparation of the injury we have done him. With a heart sincerely so disposed, we may humbly, and with a hope of acceptance, offer our gift.

Not only among the Jews, but all nations, it was account-

ed a heavy sin, to leave unfinished a sacrifice which was begun. Valerius Maximus tells us of a young man, who, holding the censer when Alexander was offering a sacrifice, received on his arm a live coal which fell from it; and though the smoke of his burning flesh was smelt by all around him, he did not shake off the coal, lest he should interrupt the sacrifice. The expression, "leave there thy gift before the altar," may imply therefore, "go not to the altar, till you are wholly prepared for the sacrifice; and can offer it, as God requires." And what our Lord here says of the legal sacrifices of the Jews, should be still more conscientiously observed in the celebration of the Lord's supper; a participation of which, is a most solemn expression of our fraternal union, in one body. Before we renew the professions, and offer the prayers of this service, if we have injured any one, let us seek his forgiveness; and if it be demanded, faithfully make restitution. See Lightfoot and Wolzogenius on the text.

LIII.

Matth. v. 27—30. Ye have heard that it hath been said *by them of old time*, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already *in his heart*. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of

thy members should perish, and not thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

"The words, *by them of old time*," says Campbell, "are not found in a great number of the most valuable MSS. and ancient versions, particularly the Syriac. The Vulgate indeed has them. Mill and Wetstein reject them." But some believe them to belong to the text, and to have been employed by our Lord, for the purpose of distinguishing the ancient interpreters of the law, from whom the traditions of the Jews were derived, from Moses, their great legislator. Our Lord, however, seems obviously to cite the precept of the Jewish law itself, from the 14th of Exodus; and it was because their sentiments on this subject were so very gross and depraved, that he so particularly and forcibly directed their attention to it.

And here have we not a very strong argument against those, who assert that Christ added no new precept to the law; but only taught the true sense and import of what the law required? The language of the law is, "thou shalt not commit adultery." Exod. xx. 14. The sentiment of Christ extends to the *indulgence of the sight*; to the most *secret feeling of the heart*. He says not, 'this is the spirit of the precept; or, 'thus should the

law be understood;' but, I SAY UNTO YOU. He is not only an interpreter of the law of Moses. He is a Teacher of what that law had not inculcated.

The true import of this passage, says Taylor, can only be understood, by considering the closely covered state of the eastern women, under their veils; wherein being totally concealed, they offer no occasion of being *looked upon*; but would take it as the greatest insolence, should their veils be drawn aside. Understand, therefore, the passage thus. "You have heard that it was said in ancient times, thou shalt not *commit* adultery. But, I say unto you, that my purer principles forbid any advances towards that crime; any commencement of what may lead to it. Whoever removes the veil to *look on* woman, whether married or unmarried, has sullied his spiritual purity, and is guilty.

There can be no doubt with any reflecting mind, but that the propensities of our nature must be subject to regulation. The question is, where the check ought to be placed; upon the *thought*, or only upon the *action*. In this question, our Saviour, in the text here quoted, has pronounced a decisive judgement. He makes the control of *thought* essential. Internal purity, with him, is every thing. And this is the only discipline which can succeed. A moral system, which prohibits actions, but leaves the thoughts at liberty, will be ineffectual, and is therefore unwise; for every moment

that is spent in meditations upon sin, increases the power of the dangerous object, which has possessed our imagination.

The desire of evil, which leads its possessor to offend against the laws of morality, Jesus, in symbolical language, calls the *right eye*, and the *right hand*; and as it is better that a member, however ornamental or useful, when infected by a disorder that endangers the whole frame, should be amputated, though it leaves the body maimed and unseemly; so it is better that any favourite passion, which is the disease of the soul, should be eradicated, rather than be suffered to spread the contagion, and thus to occasion its moral death, and its future punishment.

Other moralists judge of men by their actions. Christ brings them before a more awful and correct tribunal, and

judges them by their feelings and motives. Fornication and adultery, with other evil actions, proceed from *desire*, and desire is seated in the *heart*; and he who habitually cherishes any impure affection, and wants only an opportunity of gratifying it, is as guilty in the sight of God, as if he had committed the deed. It is to the heart, therefore, that our Lord constantly directs our attention; and the heart he constantly enjoins us to guard, as the primary seat of good and evil. It is not to be doubted then, but that many will be punished for crimes that were never done, but only *intended*; and many rewarded for virtues which, for want of opportunity, have never ripened into action.

Taylor's Fragments, p. 224. Wolzogenius, Campbell, and John Jones on the text. Paley's Evidences, Vol. 2d. of his works. Bost. Ed. p. 229.

REMARKS ON THE REPORT OF GOD'S TREATMENT OF THE FIRST MURDERER.

MR. EDITOR,

IN the Disciple for April appeared an essay styled "Report of God's treatment of the first murderer." The editor having given his opinion that the writer was a person of talents, and approved his sentiments, I enter with diffidence upon the task of animadverting them. I am however encouraged by a belief, derived from your liberality in admitting strictures upon editorial and communicated articles, you that labour for truth rather

For the Christian Disciple.

than for a system, or a party.

The subject of capital punishment is exciting great attention in the civilized world. Writers of celebrity are engaged in the discussion, and it is quite possible that a future and more enlightened age may outlaw them entirely.—But premature, overstrained condemnations of them may frustrate the object in view. It was with deep regret therefore that I saw introduced into your pages what I deem illogical and injudicious re-

marks upon this topic. An attempt is made to prove from the scriptures that God forbade inflicting death upon murderers, and that he has denounced vengeance on those who should take away the life of a murderer. No evil can arise from temperate discussions on this important theme. But while a great majority of mankind believe in the utility of capital punishments, and statesmen and christian moralists are divided in opinion respecting their necessity and lawfulness, it appears highly reprehensible to lessen the respect due to the laws of the land, and to magistrates, by denouncing the vengeance of the Almighty upon the makers and administrators of these laws.

Your essayist instances God's trial and punishment of Cain, and argues from the clemency shown to the first murderer, that life was not to be taken, even from a man slayer. He says truly that "civil tribunals pay great veneration to ancient usages and immemorial customs; and especially to precedents taken from higher courts in similar cases." Is it not going too far to say that this example stands recorded for our imitation? When Cain slew Abel the world was in its infancy, the crime was committed in the only family on earth, and God did not see fit to appoint the parent the executioner of his son. Besides, it is also a custom of courts of judicature implicitly to obey a statute in preference to any precedent, partic-

ularly when the written law bears date subsequent to the record of the precedent. If you will turn to the "reports of Moses," Exodus, xxi. chap. you will find that when our race had increased in numbers, and God had seen fit to enact laws for the government of his people, He declared that "he that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death." Not only so; death was denounced upon the *smiters* merely of their parents, upon kidnappers and slave dealers, upon all who *cursed* their parents, &c. We see then that the authority is on the other side, and that God authorized taking away life for life.

But the writer of the essay goes farther. He says God left on record "a most solemn declaration and warning to civil magistrates, and all others, not to shed the blood even of a *murderer*;" and this is the proof, "Whosoever slayeth *Cain*, vengeance shall be taken on him seven fold." Because God, for purposes unknown to us, saw fit to spare Cain, and set a *mark* upon him, or gave him a sign, that no one should slay him, and afterwards decreed that murderers should be put to death, are we to understand that the "precedent" is solely obligatory upon mankind now, and that it is unlawful to inflict death as a punishment for murder? What reasoning! To threaten the vengeance of the Almighty on magistrates for administering the laws of the land appears to me highly repreh-

sible. It is "scattering ambiguous words among the vulgar; it is exhibiting laws, approved by the majority of christian moralists, in an odious light; it is exposing the upright Legislator and Judge to obloquy. Let every argument be employed to change the minds of the community on this subject, and I wish the advocates God speed, but forbear denunciations, unauthorized by holy writ, and of dangerous tendency.

The essayist avers that God's clemency to Cain resulted in his reformation, and argues from it the inutility of sanguinary punishments. This is an important topic. Writers of great ability are discussing it. Leaving it then to enlightened philanthropists, statesmen, and christians to discuss the subject, it should be the duty of writers on moral or religious themes to inculcate a high respect for the laws of civil society, and for the magistrates who administer them.

This writer terms Cain's fratricide a "violation of a civil duty." A mild phrase surely, when as he himself remarks, the crime was aggravated in many respects. Why this sympathy for Cain, in the breast of this advocate for the abolition of capital punishments? Where is his fellow feeling for the murdered Abel, or his afflicted family? Where is his tenderness for others among whom the murderer would roam, the terror of mankind?

I have one more objection to the essay. He says this

"half enlightened age" would have sentenced Cain to death, and perhaps for form sake, it might be added, "and the Lord have mercy on your soul!" This sneer at the most solemn manner in which our venerated judges pronounce the awful sentence of death cannot be too much censured. The insinuation that the prayer with which it ends is insincere, is untrue. I hope the time will come when men will have more humane and correct views on this subject, but I feel persuaded that such efforts for the accomplishment of this object will thwart the success of it, and prolong the custom he professes so much to abhor.

Reply of the Editor.

This admonitory address has been freely admitted, as the effusion of friendship and fidelity. Still it is believed that most of the remarks would have been spared had our correspondent been acquainted with the whole Tract, from which the Report was taken, and with the character of its author. Perhaps, it was injudicious to give the Report without accompanying it with the Author's answer to some objections.

If we have been correctly informed the Author is a man venerable for his years and standing in society, amiable in his disposition, and was formerly a Judge of a county court in Connecticut. We can hardly believe that such a man would *designedly* say any thing to "lessen the respect due to

the laws of the land and to magistrates;" and on carefully reviewing the Report we have not been able to find, except in a single sentence, any thing of which such is the apparent tendency. We do not understand the writer of the Essays as having done any such thing as "denouncing the vengeance of the Almighty upon the makers and administrators of the laws;" but as merely expressing his serious belief respecting the design of God's treatment of Cain. This perhaps under a free government, he had an unquestionable right to do, however incorrect may have been his opinion.

Our friendly Monitor appears to be willing that the subject of capital punishments should be discussed; and we agree with him that it ought to be done in a prudent manner—in a manner as little as possible adapted to wound the feelings of those in authority and to "lessen the respect due to the laws of the land." But two persons who have an equal respect to the laws in general, may disagree as to the utility and justice of a particular statute and "the respect which is due" to it. Our Monitor says, "Let every argument be employed to change the mind of the community on this subject, and I wish the advocates God Speed." But surely we need not tell a writer of his discernment, that it is impossible to use any argument which is adapted to change public opinion on that subject, which is not equally adapted to "lessen

the respect" which is now entertained for the laws which require the punishments in question. He must also be aware that every argument which can be used for the purpose of changing public opinion, will be interpreted, by one or another, as adapted to "lessen the respect due to the laws and to magistrates." Has not this objection been uniformly made to the attempts to abolish the law in England, which inflicts death for stealing goods from a shop to the value of five shillings. Indeed we may ask, when was an attempt ever made to abolish or change a penal law, and the same objection was *not* urged? On similar ground the attempts which have been made to correct the common version or translation of the Bible, have been reproached as tending to "lessen the respect" which is due to the whole volume.

"Philanthropos," the "Essayist," was aware of the objection which would be brought from the other "Reports of Moses," and he attempted an answer, which may perhaps hereafter be given in this work. At present we shall only observe in general, that in his opinion, christians are no more bound to adopt one statute of the penal code of Moses, than they are to adopt the whole; that if any of those laws are now obligatory on christians, we are as really bound to take the life of the sabbath-breaker and the adulterer, as that of the murderer.

In regard to the "mild

phrase" to express Cain's fratricide, we ought to say, that Philanthropos has explained his meaning. He regards murder as a heinous crime, and Cain's fratricide as an aggravated murder; but in his opinion *men* have no right to punish crimes considered as *sins against God*, but only as *violations of civil duty*.

The last objection of our Monitor is better founded. We regret that even one remark of the Essayist was so much adapted to wound the feelings of humane Judges—and such we believe to be eminently the character of the present Judges of our Supreme Court. Yet perhaps a less answerable interpretation may be given to the passage than seems to have occurred to the mind of our correspondent.

The best writers are liable to use language inadvertently, which implies, or may be understood to imply, more than they ever intended. There is no writer, not excepting the friendly Monitor, who does not need the candor of his readers in their interpretations of his remarks. Every man in writing on such subjects is liable to be influenced by circumstances with which he has been acquainted; and under this influence to speak in a manner which implies blame, even where there is none in his own opinion, or a greater degree of blame than he means to impute. It will not be pretended by any one that all Judges of Courts have been equal to our present

Judges in regard to purity, benevolence, wisdom or humanity. Let it then be admitted that Philanthropos wrote his Essays, after having been repeatedly shocked by the apparent indifference with which he had heard the sentences of death pronounced, or after he had witnessed, on the part of a Judge, evidence of prejudice against a criminal, and an anxious desire to pronounce a sentence of *guilty*. Would it be too much to say in reference to such conduct—"And perhaps, for form sake, it might be added, *And the Lord have mercy on your Soul?*" Is it not very possible that in remarking with such occurrences impressed on the mind, the most impartial writer might adopt the language of Philanthropos, without a suspicion that his readers would consider it as applicable to judges in general? Let the Monitor imagine such to have been the impression under which the unguarded language was used—read the words again, placing the emphasis on "*perhaps,*" and then say, whether it be certain that the writer's conduct "cannot be too much censured."

Our correspondent, we believe, wrote his remarks under the influence of a just and high respect for our Judges, and an apprehension that Philanthropos intended a "sneer." These circumstances probably led him to adopt the strong language just quoted, by which he probably intended no more than that the conduct of the Essayist was very reprehensi-

ble. Yet his language may be understood as implying that a more heinous crime was never committed, For if it "can-

not be too much censured," how can its malignity and turpitude be overrated?

POETRY.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

The following lines were occasioned by a late event.

AGAIN will Spring her choicest gifts unfold,
Her waving foliage, and her flowers of gold;
Again her breath its balmy sweetness shed,
And crimson fruits her verdant garment spread.
On these, will many a form with rapture dwell,
And burst, with new formed life, from winter's spell;
Feel the warm current of the heart renew'd,
And pale disease, and hectic flush subdued.
Yet there was one, who erst to nature true,
Press'd with his early step the morning dew;
Who lov'd the lowliest flower that decks the sod,
Yet thought of nature less, than "nature's God."
For him no more the vernal gale will blow,
Nor Spring, with lavish hand, her blossoms throw.
Science, for him, no more unroll her page,
And spread the treasures of a letter'd age.
Yet will his worth a heart-felt tribute claim,
And youth and age delight to speak his name;
To paint his mind, by polished graces dress'd,
Pure as the faith that warm'd his glowing breast;
Each thought controll'd, each wayward passion still,

In meek submission to his Father's will.

Nor deem those trials light, which often bind

To earth's decaying form th' immortal mind.

Ye, who have seen by steps how sure, though slow,

"Death menac'd oft, but long withheld the blow;"

How round his heart a thousand interests press'd,

And bound by friendship's chain his grateful breast;

How bright that faith arose,—ye best can say,—

Which led the pilgrim on his weary way!

Led him to foreign climes—to distant skies,

To torrid suns, where trackless ocean lies!

Yet still he follow'd, borne by God's own hand;

And took possession of the promis'd land.

THE MARINERS PRESERVED.

A Song of Gratitude.

Afar from port, tremendous stormy skies!

All round the raging roaring billows rise!

Hope fled, despair appear'd in ev'ry face;

To God we rais'd our cries! His hand we trace;

The winds were hush'd—those boisterous waves were still;

All nature bow'd submissive to his will.

O may our hearts with gratitude adore

His boundless love and power forevermore.

K.

INTELLIGENCE.

A LETTER from THOMAS CLARKSON,
to HENRY King of Hayti.
Playford Hall, Suffolk, England,
May 24, 1816.

I HAD the honour of receiving your Majesty's letter, dated at palace of Sans Souci, February 5th, which was brought to me by Mr. Prince Sanders; and it is my intention to return an answer to it, by the same person, as well as to enter into some particulars, which I think may be acceptable to you. Having however heard that my esteemed friend Mr. Stephen Grellet who is a minister of the Gospel, belonging to the religious Society of the people called Quakers, and who is now in North America, intends, with other ministers of the same Society, to visit some of the English-West-Indian Islands, and also Hayti, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel for a season in those parts, I have thought it proper to send you this letter by him, in order that he may not go into your Island without a suitable introduction.

I am sensible how vigilant it becomes you to be with respect to strangers, some of whom may possibly visit Hayti for the purpose of plotting against its liberty and independence. And it is my belief, that such cases may exist, which induces me to lay before you the character of Mr. Grellet and his friends, in order that they may come among you without suspicion, and that they may experience the protection which all those persons ought to find, who feel it to be their duty, like the Apostles of old, to visit foreign climates, and to hazard their lives for the sake of promoting the religion of Jesus Christ. I will begin then with informing you, that Mr. Grellet was born in France, but that he left his country during the Revolution, and went to the United States of America, where he embraced the principles of the religious Society of Friends, or, as they are most commonly called, Quakers. After this he became a minister of the gospel in that Society; and in this capacity he visited England, Germany, and

France. During his stay in London, for many months, I had the happiness of knowing him. It also happened during his stay there, that his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, arrived in England; Mr. Grellet had the honour of an audience with that noble and august personage, and I know that he advocated before him, the cause of all the injured children of Africa. As to Mr. Grellet's private character, I may comprehend it in a few words, by saying, that he daily affords in his own person a proof of modesty, humility, charity, and those other virtues which belong to the Christian character. Having said thus much of this estimable person, I feel myself bound to say a few words in behalf of the clergyman's Society to which he belongs; for it is possible he may have companions with him; and it is right that your Majesty should know some of the civil and political principles of the Quakers. In the first place, they consider it to be their duty to obey civil magistrates, as the rulers under God for good; except in those religious customs and cases, where their consciences would be wounded by it. In the second place they conceive it to be their duty never to go to war, or take up arms even in their own defence; they had rather submit to the most cruel injuries than shed the blood of any of their fellow-creatures. Hence there is no rebellion, no insurrection, no plotting against government, wherever the Quakers are. And thirdly, they have long ago conceived it to be their duty to consider all the children of Africa as their brethren, and to have no concern whatever either in buying or selling, or in holding them in bondage. In all America there is not one Quaker whose character is stained by such inhuman practices. The abolition of the Slave-trade, and of slavery also, has become a principle, and has been incorporated as such into their religion. I could dwell here, if the time would permit, with the greatest delight, and I ought to add,

with the greatest gratitude, on this part of their character. They have been the constant fellow-labourers, in England, of Mr. Wilberforce and myself in this great and noble cause, from the first moment in which we ourselves embarked in it; and, in North-America they have equally supported it; indeed they have been the original instruments of effecting whatever has been done in that country, on behalf of the injured Africans and their descendants. In fact, whenever you see a Quaker you see a friend to the distressed; but more especially to those of the African race. And I cannot doubt, therefore, that every Quaker will experience your Majesty's kind protection and regard; but more particularly when he comes to you, not for the purposes of commerce, but as a promoter of the interests of religion. I shall only add to this account, that the Quakers are, in many respects, a singular people. They are singular in their language, dress, and customs. They have laid aside the usual ceremonies and formalities of the world, in saluting or addressing themselves to others. Some years ago I wrote their history, and if Mr. Grellet should receive this letter in time, he will probably present your Majesty with a copy.

I am your Majesty's friend,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

P. S. The above is the copy of a letter, which I sent last week, enclosed to my friend Mr. Stephen Grellet, that he might deliver it with his own hand, to your Majesty; but having just heard, that it is probable, that Mr. Grellet may have left America for Hayti before he receives it, I have thought it right to send this copy immediately to yourself, in order that it may be known, to your Majesty who he is, should he come without my first letter.

*Palace of Sans Souci, Nov. 18, 1816,
and 13th year of Independence.*

The KING, to Mr. THS. CLARKSON.

SIR, MY FRIEND,

YOUR two letters of the tenth of June and sixteenth of August, have reached me. They relate to Mr. Grellet, a minister of the gospel in

connection with the religious Society of the Quakers, and also to the principles of that estimable Society, with which I am perfectly well acquainted. If Mr. Grellet and his companions should visit this country, I will not fail, according to your recommendation, to treat them with kindness; and to entertain for him the respect which is due to his own character, as well as to the consideration of his being your friend. I am delighted to hear that he is a friend to the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and to the unhappy Africans and their descendants. These sentiments, which indeed particularly distinguish the Quakers, must ever ensure them my respect and esteem. I have received with pleasure the History of the Quakers, which you sent me by Mr. Prince Sanders, and thank you for it, with all my heart. Believe me, with the highest respect, and the most cordial friendship,

HENRY.

SENECA INDIANS.

THE Governor of the State of New York, communicated to the Legislature for their consideration the following petition from the principal Chiefs of the Seneca Indians. While this pathetic address awakens our sympathy for the sufferings of our red brethren, we hope the confidence which they express in the being and government of God will be improved by Christians, and that something will yet be done for their everlasting and spiritual improvement, that a remnant of those whose soil we possess, may yet receive some remuneration for their injuries.

To His Excellency DEWIT CLINTON,
Governor of the State of N. York.

Feb. 14th, 1818.

FATHER,—We learn from your talk delivered at the great council fire at Albany, your opinion of the condition and prospects of your red children.

FATHER,—We feel that the hand of our God has long been heavy on his red children. For our sins he has brought us low, and caused us to melt away before our white brothers, as snow before the fire. His ways are perfect; he regardeth not the complexion of man. God is terrible in

judgment. All men ought to fear before him. He putteth down and buildeth up, and none can resist him.

FATHER,—The Lord of the whole earth is strong; this is our confidence. He hath power to build up as well as to pull down. Will he keep his anger forever? Will he pursue to destruction the workmanship of his own hand, and strike off a race of men from the earth whom his care hath so long preserved through so many perils?

FATHER,—We thank you that you feel anxious to do all you can to the perishing ruins of your red children. We hope, Father, you will make a fence strong and high around us, that wicked white men may not devour us at once, but let us live as long as we can. We are persuaded you will do this for us, because our field is laid waste and trodden down by every beast; we are feeble and cannot resist them.

FATHER,—We are persuaded you will do this for the sake of our white brothers, lest God, who has appeared so strong in building up white men, and pulling down Indians, should turn his hand and visit our white brothers for their sins, and call them to account for all the wrongs they have done them, and all the wrongs they have not prevented that was in their power to prevent, to their poor red brothers who have no helper.

FATHER,—Would you be the father of your people, and make them good and blessed of God, and happy, let not the cries of your injured red children ascend into his ears against you.

FATHER,—We desire to let you know that wrong information hath reached your ears. Our western brethren hath given us no land.—You will learn all our mind on this subject, by a talk which we sent our great father, the President of the U. States. We send it to you, that you may see it and learn our mind.

Red Jacket, his X mark—Young Ring, his X mark—Captain Billey, his X mark—Captain Polland, his X mark—Twenty Canoes, his X mark—James Stephenson, his X mark—Chief Warrior, his X mark—John Snow, his X mark—Stride Town,

his X mark—Wheel Barrow, his X mark—Captain Cole, his X mark—Big Kettle, his X mark.

Done at the great council fire, Seneca village, near Buffalo, 14th February, 1818.

HARRY YORK, Interpreter,
his X mark.

P. S. The above Chiefs request your excellency to publish or cause to be published, that article of the treaty between the state of New-York and the Indians, that relates to their fishing and hunting privileges, which their white brethren seem to have forgotten.

SUBSTANCE OF A LETTER FROM A
GENTLEMAN IN OHIO.

March 11th, 1818.

I have for several years wept over the vast sufferings of an afflicted world; I have wept to see rational beings so blind as to pursue a path as one that would certainly lead to liberty and happiness, when, at the same time, it is the very path that leads to slavery and misery. Had the custom of war never obtained, liberty and happiness had never been endangered. All the nations of the earth would have lived in peace and harmony, and the interest of one would have been the interest of all. Indeed and in truth *now* the interest of one is the interest of all; but it appears that men have become so blind that they cannot see their real interest; or if they do see it, they are no longer desirous to cultivate it. Unhappily for the world a false idea of glory and honour has entered it. This idea has ever been the great spring of motion to the ambitious. To crown themselves with such glory and honour they have not hesitated to plunge nations into all the horrors of war;—by such men the plains of every nation on earth have at different times been crimsoned with human blood. What floods of tears have in all ages been shed by the number of disconsolate widows and helpless orphans, which have been made by this barbarous custom! How often have they been exposed to the keen blasts of piercing cold, and heavy torrents of chilling rain! How often have they been clothed in rags and pinched with

hunger! Mankind have suffered more by this custom than the imagination can possibly paint.

I have, from observation, become perfectly convinced that education has more influence over the human mind than every thing else. Though this assertion to some may appear too bold, I believe that every person who has thought on it, will readily acquiesce in the opinion. From the birth of war to the present day, men have been taught to applaud the bloody custom as the guardian of liberty and happiness; thus it has gone on till a large portion of mankind think it absolutely necessary.

All that is necessary is to turn the channel of education. Had a hundredth part of the labour and money been expended to render the custom odious in the eyes of mankind that has been expended to prosecute and applaud it, it would long ago have been blown out of existence.

I have been much pleased to learn that Missionaries were preaching—and Bible societies spreading the Scriptures, through the Heathen and Mahometan nations of the earth. But when I have taken a second consideration on the subject, I have wept, believing the labour to be spent always for nought.—And Why! Because of the great inconsistency in the language and conduct of christian nations. The missionaries preach and the Scriptures declare *universal love*; yet how often do we see christians plunging their weapons of death into each others bowels! Hence Pagans and Mahometans are led to believe that their religion is better founded than ours.

Let the christian nations of the earth unite as one great band of brothers, joined by all the ties of interest and love, and under the immediate guidance and direction of our great, wise and good Parent: then they may with success spread the christian religion among Pagans and Mahometans. This done, they may follow on with the olive branch of peace, and spread it from pole to pole.

For the first seventeen years of my life I was—as far as my abilities extended—a warm advocate for war; and it was not until near the close of

the late war with England, that I became convinced.

I have been much pleased to learn that so many eminent characters in the union have felt so much interested in the welfare of mankind, as to spend a portion of their time and labour in endeavouring to forward the glorious cause of universal peace. Not long since I called a meeting of the citizens of this vicinity for forming or endeavouring to form a Peace Society—before which I read an address, I had drawn up, and several other persons spoke on the occasion. After which I was pleased to see nearly fifty persons give their names.

As the foregoing letter was probably written without any expectation that it would appear in print, liberty has been taken to omit some words, and, in a very few instances, to change the phraseology, but with strict regard to the meaning of the writer. He appears to have been a man of a serious and reflecting mind. The strong language which he has used respecting the influence of education, and the inconsistency of Christians, deserves particular attention. A very great part of the present depravity in all nations may perhaps justly be denominated *educational depravity*. This is true of the nations of Christendom as well as of other nations. The modes of education among Christians have not only been defective, but in many respects absolutely pernicious—much more adapted to make disciples of Odin or Mahomet, than genuine followers of the Prince of peace. Nor may we expect that a thorough and general reformation of morals will ever be effected, until there shall have been a radical change in the modes of education. The maxim of the apostle “That which a man soweth that shall he also reap” is as applicable to education as to any other thing. Were the husbandman to be at ever so much expense in ploughing and manuring his field, still he would have no reason to expect a plentiful harvest of clear wheat, if the seed sown were a mixture of tares and cockle, with a small portion of the precious grain. As little reason have we to expect a

harvest of Christian virtues from modes of education by which we implant a mixture of Gothic, Mahometan and Christian principles—the two former being regarded as supreme, the latter as subordinate.

ADDRESS

Of the Peace Society of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.

AGREEABLY to public notice, a respectable number of the citizens of this State assembled in this town, on the 20th inst. to take into consideration the propriety of forming a Peace Society in the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations. After a free discussion of this important subject, it was resolved, as the sense of the meeting, that it is highly expedient that such a Society be established. The Constitution shows the principles upon which it is founded, and the benevolent object it contemplates. The design of this address is to invite the serious and candid attention of the public to this subject, and to obtain their patronage and co-operation in promoting peace on earth and good will to men. Resting our faith upon the immutable promises of the divine word, we entertain no doubt of the ultimate success of the exertions of the friends of peace.

The prophetic page presents the cheering and animating truth, that wars must cease to the ends of the earth; and the precepts of the Prince of Peace, illustrated and enforced by His own conduct, show in what manner this desirable object may be effected. When men shall be influenced by His spirit, precepts and example, their lusts and passions, whence proceed wars and fightings, will be subdued, and it will be their desire "to do unto others, as they would others should do unto them." Various events of a recent date inspire a hope that this auspicious era will soon commence. The establishment of Bible Societies in different parts of Christendom, and their activity in diffusing the Scriptures among all the families of the earth, will have a happy tendency in illuminating the minds of men upon the awful subject of war. From the inspired volume, the aged

and the youth will learn the origin, the nature and the enormity of this desolating and wide-spreading custom; and their faith, if it be operative, will influence their tempers and their lives, "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God."

But our hearts are still further encouraged by the establishment of Peace Societies, both in Europe and America. The exertions of those infant institutions have been attended with beneficial effects, and the minds of Christians and Christian Ministers have been more powerfully impressed with the enormity and inconsistency of war, and more actively engaged in disseminating the principles of peace. Animated by these events, we are disposed to use our influence and ability in promoting the welfare and the happiness of our brethren of the human race; and humbly trust, that the blessings of the God of Peace will attend our feeble exertions. We indulge the pleasing hope, that we shall have the best wishes, aid, and support of every pious Christian, of every philanthropick and benevolent mind, of whatever religious or political denomination.

Providence, March 26, 1818.

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

Mr. Thomas Tracy, Cambridge.
 Samuel Gilman, do.
 John Allyn, do.
 John A. Shaw, do.
 P. Osgood, do.
 Alvan Lamson, do.
 F. W. P. Greenwood, do.
 Andrew Bigelow, do.
 Seth Alden, do.
 Jonathan P. Dabney, Salem.
 E. Q. Sewall Concord.

OBITUARY.

In Havana, Rev. Joseph McKean, D. D. and Boylston Professor of Rhetoric, &c. in Harvard University.

In Haverhill, April 10th, Rev. William Bachelor, pastor of the Baptist Society in that town, aged 50.

In Taunton, Nicholas Tillinghast, Esq. aged 51.

In Boston, James Cutler, one of the Editors of the Boston Gazette, aged 44.

In Brighton, Wm. Cook, aged 44.